

Planning statement to accompany application for the regularisation of unit 18 and associated external areas in connection with planning consent 20/01193/FUL, development of former Dexine Rubber site, Spotland Road, Rochdale.

Introduction.

We are instructed to submit a planning application to regularise certain changes which have taken place on site to the development approved under planning reference 20/01193/FUL. After discussions with the council in respect of the applicant's current submission to discharge the planning conditions for the larger development it was felt that changes made to unit 18 could only be dealt with as a formal planning submission to which this statement relates.

Reasons for the current submission.

The site has seen many alternative proposals put forward and approved by the council, but the challenges presented by the site, difficulties in finding appropriate uses and its location in the Spotland Road conservation area, stifled development for some time.

In the end a commercial development was felt most appropriate, and consent was secured under planning reference 19/00804/FUL. This scheme gained access via the existing factory entrance onto Spotland Road and located a row of industrial units backing onto Spotland Road. Following further consideration of the highway's safety issues, and the developer being able to secure other units immediately adjacent to the site an alternative layout was sought to utilise the secondary site entrance onto Spotland Road, incorporating highways improvements to this junction. This single access could then form the main route into what would become a small industrial park under the control of the applicant. Consent was granted under planning reference 20/01193/FUL. This scheme also provided for a row of smaller industrial units backing onto Spotland Road.

Relevant conditions were discharged, and existing buildings demolished on site and the development was progressed under the above planning consent. Development began at the lower end of the site and progressed to the area of the site nearest Spotland Road. As the development progressed interest from prospective tenants indicated that the medium sized units were the most desirable and the developer felt that provision of a similar sized unit in the location of unit 18 would be feasible, and as steel framework was becoming more difficult to obtain and costs were rising the decision was made to extend unit 18.

It was felt that this was a reasonable option given that the planning permission granted under 19/00804/FUL indicated, on the approved layout, units located at the corner of Spotland Road and Primrose Street which would extend further towards Primrose Street than the alterations to unit 18. Effectively therefore planning permission had been granted in the past for a similar arrangement. By way of illustration below is an extract from the approved layout under 19/00804/FUL upon which has been overlaid the outline of the current units as constructed on site.



The above base image is an extract of the approved layout under 19/00804/FUL showing location of units 9-12 and new access onto Spotland Road. Red dashed lines indicate the location/size of units 16-18 as constructed on site – planning consent 20/01193/FUL includes realigned access onto Spotland Road to the west.

Further complications arose on site with the discovery of a high voltage mains electricity cable running along the frontage of units 16-18 which resulted in a slight repositioning of the units northwards to provide the easement required by Electricity Northwest. The cable was also located with minimal cover which necessitated a slight raising in the level of the units adjacent to the cable.

Whilst we appreciate the alterations to the proposal made on site has resulted in a loss of landscaping at the corner of the site with Spotland Road and Primrose Street additional landscaping has been provided on the wider site to compensate. This compensatory landscaping is located in an area, along the northern boundary, which would be more benefit in screening neighbouring properties from the site and screening the site from outside the site boundaries.

A comprehensive landscaping scheme has been submitted to discharge the relevant planning condition, which specifically relates to areas of landscaping currently available on site. This scheme has been prepared by our Chartered Landscape Architect consultant who has given careful consideration to the selection of plants and their long-term establishment in the areas available.

Conclusion.

In conclusion we feel there are legitimate reasons for the alterations to unit 18 which have taken place on site. The amendments reflect the layout as approved under planning consent 19/00804/FUL and therefore make the situation no worse than it would have been had this planning permission been implemented. The development has now largely been completed and has already established a vibrant commercial site which clearly provides desirable units for a variety of different business users, creating employment and revenue for the borough. Therefore, we would hope the council will feel able to support this submission which makes a positive contribution to the area.

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